



---

Newsletter

No. 13

July 1979

---

# WOMEN

---

Lutheran World Federation

**LWF EUROPEAN  
CONSULTATION  
FOR WOMEN**

**VIENNA 1979**

When we 65 women from 15 European and 2 overseas countries gathered in Vienna, our aim was not to talk about our "role as mothers and grandmothers" but to discuss our initiatives and contributions toward the creation of just, equitable and peaceful societies and a renewed and united church. We recognized that for many centuries it was the man, the male who has defined reality, who has named his surroundings, who has set the social structures, who has developed the values of society and who has defined our own identity.

This entire set-up was carefully guarded by the social institutions and sanctioned by theology and religious practices. We, however, understood that if we want to survive - and survive in dignity - we have to reshape our world, recreate our societies. The time has come for us women to rename reality, redefine our surroundings, revalue lost values

and devalue those which triumphantly lead us into destruction and despair. This is not an easy task. Through our socialization we learned that our thoughts, feelings and actions are not as important as those of the male and we willingly gave away our power to others to be used as they saw it fit. Today we recognize that those values which society assigned to us as women, are important and that our leadership is necessary if we want to create a just, equitable and peaceful world.

In order to achieve that, however, we also need to rename ourselves. The meek, powerless mother earth needs to recognize her value and power. Instead of being the named, we have to become the naming, instead of the object, the subject, instead of the obeying assistants, critical co-creators. Instead of giving away our power, we have to use it for the bene-

fit of humankind as a whole.

We need a new woman in order to create a new world and in order to shock our brothers into renaming themselves so that out of the loneliness of oppression and the loneliness of dominion we can join together for a partnership which is the prerequisite for a responsible dominion over the earth.

When we discussed the rising consciousness of women and its significance for

- a) our Europe of tomorrow
- b) reconciliation and peace
- c) theology and the renewal of the church

we were aware of the fact that we are part of a movement which has the potential to alter the future of humankind in a significant way.

There were several basic revolutions throughout history which changed human beings' perception of others and of themselves. Today we witness the revolution of human dignity as it is expressed in the anti-apartheid, anti-colonial, anti-racist, feminist and other movements. All of them are related, for all of them are engaged in the affirmation of human worth and human dignity. Yet it is the women's movement which has the potential to be of the greatest signifi-

cance, for it challenges those attitudes and relationships which are most basic to human beings all over the world. By challenging female-male relationships as manifested by the patriarchal family, the women's movement also challenges the hierarchical institutions which were modelled after it. More than that, women challenge the existing value systems according to which those values which are socialized into males also dominate society as a whole.

In a world where technological and economic progress creates manifold unexpected problems and possibilities, where a mindless armsrace controlled by only a few threatens to destroy all, where the world's goods increasingly benefit a decreasing percentage of the world's population, there is time for us women - half of humankind - to create viable alternatives to the existing situation. It is time for us to break the barriers which limit our imagination, which encage our creativity and which do not even allow us to envisage a different future.

In discussing the "future Europe in which we would like to live", we tried to do exactly that, namely to dream of a continent in which justice, equality and peace would prevail, in which the

diversities would be respected and which would not base its wealth on the exploitation of other nations. In formulating steps toward that goal, we recognized that our contribution as women could be extremely significant, if we just learned to use the power we have in a positive way. It is clear that there is a long way to go in study, reflection, building

of consciousness and of solidarity before we can make the desired significant contribution. We pray for courage to dream of new possibilities, wisdom to formulate the first steps toward putting them into practice and strength to carry those steps through even if this task is more difficult than envisaged.

*By Rev. Eva Zabolai-Csekme*

*The three major lectures given at the Consultation were the following:*

1. *What does the rising consciousness of women mean for our Europe of tomorrow ( by Dr. Kerstin Anér )*

2. *What does the rising consciousness of women mean for theology and the renewal of the Church ( by Prof. Dr. Kurt Lüthi )*

3. *What does the rising consciousness of women mean for reconciliation and peace ( by Dr. Eva Senghaas-Knobloch )*

*These lectures along with the recommendations of the conference are gathered in a documentation and are available in English or German upon request.*

## **What does the rising consciousness of Women mean for our Europe of Tomorrow ?**

**Dr. Kerstin Aner**

**My Sisters,**

The first thing a young and emergent nation finds it necessary to acquire is not just an airline of its own, but a history of its own. Without history, identity does not exist. This goes for nations, for individuals and for groups that become conscious of themselves. Women are such a group, and so when I am called upon to speak about the future of women in Europe, I first of all turn my thoughts back to what some prehistorians now are calling Old Europe.

This is the deep south-east of Europe, the Balkans, southern Russia, the Danube region, about 7.000 to 4.000 B.C. This period does not exist so far in anybody's schoolbooks, so we have never heard of it. Nevertheless, in museums and nowadays even in a few books, this period can be seen and studied.

It was an agrarian civilisation, growing many kinds of cereals and other vegetables, using sheep, goats, cows and eating many varieties of small game. Their homes were first of all temples, and the hearth was at the same time an altar. They seem to have had no weapons, but enjoyed a high artistic culture, not just in pottery and sculpture, but in textiles too. At least that is the conclusion one can draw from their many small sculptures of people, where everybody, and especially the women, wear varied, intricate and decorative clothing, obviously more for delight than for necessity.

This civilisation was watched over by the goddesses. They are everywhere, chiefly in animal shape. There are owl goddesses, hedgehog goddesses,

frog goddesses, crane goddesses, bee goddesses. Some of their attributes have survived into classical Greek times, most have vanished. Male gods are few and far between. They are never armed, but look fragile, melancholy, youthful. Some of them carry their virility before them in their hands, as if it could not stand up by itself.

It is of course a very risky adventure to interpret so far-off a civilisation by its art, or by what, among its arts, has happened to survive ninety centuries. Still, the impression is inescapable: Old Europe was dominated by its women, worshipped its women, grew through its women. The thrust of the society was towards reproduction, not war.

Like most human stories, this one has no happy end. Warlike, male-dominated, probably Aryan tribes broke in on Old Europe and subjugated it. Their faith and their artefacts were buried. Some of their religious ideas seem to have sprouted again much later, and we possibly owe some of the loveliest Greek goddess images to them - Artemis, mistress of wild animals; Hera, the cow-eyed. The highly sophisticated and unarmed Cretan culture may also be a grand-daughter of the Old European farmers and their wives. What is certain is that our history as Europeans does not begin with Greek gods and warriors, fighting round Troy. It started with women making beautiful pottery, weaving wonderful clothes and reverencing the Great Mother in bee, hedgehog and toad. (Marija Gimbutas: The Gods and Goddesses of Old Europe. Thames and Hudson, 1974.)

Most books about the original matriarchy back in the beginning of history have no foundation in fact. This one has. And we perhaps do well to remember our earliest indigenous mothers and take courage from their lives, even if they ended up killed by the Indo-European sword like so many others. They help us to realize what femaleness really means. Not softness, weakness, passivity; but the huge strength of reproduction, the deep relationship to the giving Earth, and the supreme power to attract the other sex.

The image of the human couple as complementing each other - he strong, she weak, he active, she passive, in fact "me Tarzan, you Jane" - is a very provincial image, limited in time and space to a very small part of the

history of humankind. Almost everywhere except in a few high cultures men have feared women, as the inscrutable wells of life. Female sexuality has been feared because it is so strong and overwhelming - hence all those taboos which we today interpret as intimating contempt or disgust.

Read the Song of Songs, read medieval European ballads, read any devotional literature before the nineteenth century - you will find women described as sexually competent and aggressive. They were generally blamed, not praised for this (except in the Song of Songs, that unique miracle), but they were at least not told that frigidity was their fate and chief virtue.

I have stressed this aspect of the women image, because it will help you to see how very plastic all such images are. Indeed, man is the only animal who creates himself - unless you count woman. And this can give us hope when it comes to changing our own consciousness and with it the consciousness of our civilisation. It has been done before - only generally to us, not by us.

But what about the real physical and genetic differences between men and women? Do they not exist? And should we not draw conclusions from them? Well, the answer to the first question is yes, and to the second no. At least we should not draw any mechanical and obvious conclusions.

Recent biological research has shown that the female sex is the original one. An embryo is by its nature feminine. If it is to develop into a boy, something has to be added to it, certain special genes which determine a new development. Woman is the ground and the origin, man an interesting new experiment. It is also a fact that men vary much more in physical and intellectual qualities, than do women. There are more male idiots and geniuses than female of either kind, and genetic variation in males is much broader. There are of course good evolutionary reasons for this. Women have much more and harder work to do to produce the next generation, than men have. Men are, from the point of view of evolution, expendable. You can use lots of them, make new projects, advance by trial and error. But mothers are not expendable, they are expensive and must be hardy and cannot be used for experimenting in the same way.

What sort of social consequences should mankind draw from these facts? Some present-day feminists love quoting the data about the female embryo being the original type. Others get rather bored with this and say: it may be true, but is has nothing to do with how we want to change the world. Let's forget genetics and concentrate on politics.

Very well, that is probably a good thing. But let us at least not forget what genetics has taught us, when male persons (scientific or unscientific) proudly tell us that women's brains are lighter, their lungs and muscles are smaller, and men do better than women on an average, in certain tests of space perception. The latter is a favourite subject to many men, who because of it wish to forbid women to become engineers.

The answer to that is simply that the same tests show a certain statistical superiority of women in linguistic gifts. But no one, not even a woman, has suggested on the strength of those tests that men should not be allowed to become language teachers or interpreters.

No biological research at all is necessary to show that women bear babies and suckle them, and that men do not. But what should a fact like this mean translated into the arrangements of a particular human society? And what should it mean if it is taken together with other facts, for instance about animal babies who thrive when staying close to their mothers and pine when she is taken away from them?

You all know how this is generally interpreted. Whether the mother works beside the father or only in her own home, she is always made to feel that the chief responsibility for keeping the child happy is hers. Further, the responsibility for keeping her fully-grown, able-bodied husband fed, clean and happy also falls on her, whether there are children in the household or not. This is often taken as a necessary effect of the fact that she has a uterus and he does not.

But there is nothing necessary at all about this state of affairs. I will now recount to you a description of a society where people draw entirely different conclusions from the same biological and psychological premises.

Whether this society exists or not is not in question. Just decide whether it is logical or not.

In this culture, everybody is convinced that the happiness of society rests on the happiness of children, because if a person is stunted and illtreated in infancy, he will grow up a menace to himself and others. But a child cannot be happy unless he/she is close to his mother and she is happy. An unhappy mother cannot bring up happy children. But a woman, in order to be a happy mother, needs to be taken care of, to have security, to be respected, to be helped physically and psychologically.

Nothing very peculiar so far, you may think. But now look at the consequences:

Extremely drastic moral demands are made on men in this society. As soon as a man has become an expectant father, every liberty is taken away from him. He must from now on cleave to his woman, fulfil her every wish, look after her comfort and peace of mind in every way. Should he leave her, the most painful sanctions of society are levelled against him; he is treated as a criminal and a sinner. Should he fall so low as to deceive her with another woman, no one will speak to him again.

As long as the woman needs him, he is forced not only to support her and her child, but also to be nice, smiling, humble and eager to please, just like a Japanese air stewardess in our advertisements. His whole training is directed towards making him a good father, that is: one who does everything the mother tells him to do. His own personality is of no interest to anybody, or rather it is explained to him that his personality is entirely taken up into his sacred paternal duties.

If, on the other hand, the woman does not want to bear him a child, she has the right to refuse, using the pill or an abortion, without asking his permission. If she wants to take her child and leave him, she is entitled to do so - but if this later makes her unhappy, society will disapprove of her, for her highest duty is to be happy.

Should two women assert their rights to the same man, it is the man who is considered extremely immoral - the women do only what is human and natural. And if a man complains that he is being fettered in too restricted a life-style - if he should wish to climb Mount Everest or discover the South Pole instead - then he is told that of course one can understand his feelings, but he has to remember that society would fall to pieces if he should fail at his prime duty: to make the mother of his child happy. Because - who else would do it? He cannot very well disregard a duty which is so obviously contained in the very idea of masculinity. He cannot go against Nature, can he?

I have given you this picture of a logical utopia (or dystopia, if you wish) just to show how little our human arrangements of gender roles are prescribed by nature. They are created by us. We can now exorcise the bogey of the "feminine woman" or the "masculine man", who haunt so many of us. Human nature is capable of any amount of variety, indeed that is chiefly what "being human" means.

My little parable has another point, though. It shows that whatever blueprint for a new society we draw up, there are certain constraints that we cannot get rid of. People, male or female, do not just have rights and liberties; they also have needs which must be filled; and they have duties to fill those needs. Women, as a matter of fact, have in recent centuries been forced to fill some of those duties far more than men, especially the duties of giving others the services we all need to survive, physically and psychologically. It is no wonder that many of us now stress our freedoms more than our duties, since our duties have been so unfairly stressed for us by the sex which did not assume them. But this does not mean we can just do away with the duties.

Does it mean we can lay them on "society", that is to say on paid members of the social professions? To a certain extent, yes, certainly. But even in the wealthiest welfare states we are now finding out that it is impossible to pay for all those services which we need - as children, elderly, sick or in other ways helpless. There simply is not that much money to go around, not if you squeeze the taxpayer white.

I should like to quote to you here two studies of the future, one by Americans and one by Europeans.

In a study from 1975, by Magda Cordell et al, called Women and World Change (FUTURES, 1975, no. 5, page 383), the authors point out that the link between having a paid employment and having social status is not an eternal part of human nature. It is, in fact, rather recent. "In the majority of previous societies the highest social status was accorded to those elites who did not work. Charges that lack of work erodes the initiative and self-respect of the person seem not to have been operable in historical circumstances.

It is somewhat paradoxical, therefore, that much concern for the future of women is still arrayed around the value of work and career in determining their roles and status in society. The idea of the working women of the future is often tied to traditional concepts of economic man. Despite our recurrent world crises and the marginal position of the poorer nations, human society in general is moving out of the phase in which gainful, economically oriented work is the linch-pin of the social structure.

The decline of "economic" work certainly does not mean the decline of meaningful activities for humans, whose performance may resemble work in the intensity of their commitment and their importance to society." And the authors go on to point out that although today it is obviously of the first importance to women to get access to paid work on the same conditions as men, they should not let themselves be trapped in this as the only kind of meaningful work.

These views are those of people in the most affluent country of the world. They have to be adapted to make sense to people in less affluent countries. There is one way, however, in which they make immediate sense to the poorest of all. Women in the Third World often refuse to limit the number of their children in what would seem to the observer a rational way. But to her, children are not only old age pension, they are also her only work and her only status symbol. Without them, she does not go on to more meaningful occupations - she is just left with no meaning in her life at all.

As a consequence, leading women from the Third World all say that the best way to limit births and to prevent the population explosion is to educate women. The more education women have, the less children do they bear. They have found other interests, other rewards. But without these new interests, it is cruel and meaningless to tell the poor women of the world to have only a few children.

The women I have just now been talking of are those who never, or hardly ever, get paid for any work at all. They labour hard, making up the greater part of the labour force in agriculture, but they seldom and sparsely come within the cash economy of their countries at all. What money there is about goes to the men. In our Europe the difference between the unpaid work of the women and the paid work of the men is not quite so sharply defined, but it is there all the same.

As Ivan Illich has said: "No industrialized country would be able to last at all without the work that women do and which it is impossible to industrialize."

This part of the work is described in the European future study I mentioned a moment ago, a piece of collective research by social scientists from many Western European countries called EUROPE 2000, ed. Peter Hall (Duckworth 1977.) In this book, the authors point out that the family has to be redefined or a great deal of work that is necessary to society will never get done at all. They continue: "The problems of the old and of women can be resolved by creating a number of new bureaucratic institutional arrangements. More intensive care in old people's homes, more public transport, more meals on wheels, more old people's housing, more day-care centers for children, more reception offices and self-service laundries.

Or they can be resolved by reversing the whole trend of the modern world and restoring the extended family to its traditional role, so that many of the so-called problems disappear, being resolved by mutual aid among members of the extended family."

They go on to point out that there is much to be said for the extended family from the point of view of society. It husbands scarce resources and it could provide a whole variety of supports for the working mother - not

merely through the help of old people, but through a new division of tasks between men and women.

This new division of tasks is of course something that is being tried in many countries, not least in my own, where legislators and opinion moulders do their best to make fathers shoulder their physical and moral responsibilities, whether married or not. But the question is whether this can really be done within the division of work and the patterns of work that exist in any industrial country, whether capitalist or state-capitalist. EUROPE 2000 points out here: "For the extended family to be fully effective in this role, a simple return to traditional patterns would hardly be sufficient, for modern economy and society are simply not organized in the old way - least of all spatially. For this solution to operate it would at the very least seem necessary to return a great deal of paid work to the home base, so that this work and unpaid household tasks can be mixed in a much more flexible way.

The new-style extended family would need to be based on voluntary recognition of the need for mutual support and mutual aid. It is not at all clear how this could operate and in particular how it could become reasonably universal."

The authors recognize that a Europe built on these kinds of extended families or communes, not resulting out of blood relationship, would need a strong Puritan morality to keep them together, with the accent on duty and work, not on leisure and freedom. It would also probably have to lay much less stress on professional and geographical mobility than today. But the point would be that these disadvantages would be shared equally by the sexes and ages.

I too see a long and heavy road before us, until we reach this more equitable sharing of burdens. But I think it very important and very possible that when women really find out what they themselves want, not what we have always been told we wanted, then the unpaid work which keeps society going will come to the surface and be treated seriously. And I am not now talking only or chiefly about the work done by full-time housewives. They, at least in the affluent countries, cannot really be said to work full-time at all

as soon as they do not have young children to care for. If they do, then it means that the employers of their husbands receive the value not only of the husbands' work but also that of the wives, and this is not a very fair or just arrangement for anybody.

When I talk of unpaid work, I mean that which we all, men and women, housewives and working women, do for each other all the time. We all now and then give a helping hand to people, physically or emotionally or intellectually, and in so doing provide them with something which they would have had to pay hard cash for in other circumstances, either directly or through their taxes. It is by no means certain that everybody would be happier if all these services were in fact paid for. But one thing is absolutely certain: we can't do without them.

Now, I think it very important that we start thinking about unpaid work and if possible prodding our economists into helping us, without introducing a lot of moral judgements in a premature way. For it is very easy and cheap to say that people should be more altruistic, they should think more of their old people, they should help each other more, etc.. But it will do no good at all unless we try to find out in what kind of conditions these services can flourish, what kind of life-style will really help people to serve each other, what organisation of the paid work will best leave room and air for the unpaid kind. There are some very interesting thoughts and experiments in this direction going on in various parts of Europe, and I think this is one of the most fruitful ways in which we as women can bring our particular experience to bear on the future of Europe.

But there are many other ways, of course. Why do we, for instance, bear fewer and fewer children in Europe? Several of the most advanced countries, both in East and West, are now having fewer children than is necessary to keep the population stable. Not very many years ago, demographers were talking of zero growth of the population as something far off and desirable. Now it is here in the industrialized world, and even some of the more advanced developing countries start to fall below their projected population trends.

From one point of view this is of course a good thing, since the earth cannot take an unlimited number of people and we are already crowding it. On the other hand, any particular nation that stops reproducing itself has definite troubles awaiting it. I will not now, however, discuss whether one should do anything about the sinking birthrate and if so, what. I will just point out what this means in terms of the lives of women.

For the first time in human history, women are able to decide the number of their children without openly murdering them, which has always been the way humanity has managed its numbers before. Hunter-gatherers today, representing the most primitive way of life on earth, still practise selective infanticide to keep the numbers of the tribe congruent with the amount of food available. In our own industrial societies, however, it lies in the hand of the individual women to make the decision. Not the husband or father, not the tribe or its priest, but the lonely woman herself. This differs a little from country to country, depending on abortion laws, availability of the Pill, etc., but in principle the situation is there for all Europe, and it is new.

The French sociologist Evelyne Sullerot points out in her latest book ("Le Fait Féminin", Fayard, Paris 1978) that women have a remarkable talent for seeing their assets as disadvantages. Since 1945, she says, European women have had a practical monopoly on educating the young. Instead of grasping the opportunity, they have complained about it. They also do not realize the power which is in their hands now that they control their fertility. I think personally that it would be a very good thing if we did think of this, not in order to threaten our men with a child-production strike unless they behave, but in order to find out what sort of society we want for our children, and then take the responsibility for working towards it.

I do not believe that all women as women must agree on all or most points in a political program. We have many varying interests and ideas as human beings. But there are certain experiences which are ours, which our menfolk do not share, and which should be taken much more into account.

I will just mention one here:

In all places of work, it is of the first importance that people work well together, that there is a good spirit, that people fit well together. All manuals of economy have a brief chapter on this. But the ones who really know what it takes to create such a spirit and such a mental climate are generally women. We have been brought up from the beginning to be sensitive to the way things are said, not just what is said. Male executives nowadays, at least in the West, are often sent to so-called "sensitivity training" in order to achieve this talent. Women have known it all the time and just kept quiet about it. But if an office runs with profit or not very often depends on just such intangibles. We should speak up about them, proud of our own experience and judgement.

I should now like to touch on another aspect of life, where the contribution of women is far too small and should be much larger. I am talking of science and technology. And not just in the sense that we should produce fewer bombs and more ploughshares. The whole spirit and direction of science is far too male-oriented, and I will just quote two of our sisters on this.

First, Dr. Diana Manning, Research Fellow at Middlesex Polytechnic, Britain. She says: "As an academic scientist myself, I am amused by the persistent attitude that women cannot be good scientists because they are too interested in people, they aren't able to cut themselves off from other aspects of life and devote themselves to a specialty, and so on. Yet, these are just the qualities that are needed if science is to be used in the interests of society. The change this would involve in the organisation and education of science, though radical, need not interfere with scientific "rigour" and might, hopefully, restore the essential elements of humility and responsibility to both pure research and R & D."

Next, Mlle Jacqueline Feldman, C.N.R.S. in Paris. She said at a recent Nobel symposium in Stockholm that the values of the male sex dominate in science and are considered better than female ones.

"Let us take the example of psychology. The current ideology says that women are better fitted than men to take care of children. But these jobs, however vital they may be to society, are of low status. So it is the scientist who will be asked to speak in an intellectual manner about the education of children. He will use in his language all the complicated words and complicated figures necessary to fit into an official scientific psychology. And then he will be the one who gets social recognition. Science thus takes away some of the prestige from the traditional role that women still had."

One particular aspect of science which women should take more firmly in hand is the science of medicine as it touches our own bodies and reproductive organs. Let me just give you one example here, of what industrialized society and affluent lifestyles are actually doing to us. I am quoting Mme Evelyne Sullerot here again. She points out that the life cycle of a woman today is in fundamental respects completely different from what she was conditioned to by those many hundred thousands of years before history. In the state of nature, a woman was pregnant or lactating for 20 years of her fertile life. She only had 4 or 5 children, but suckled them for very long periods. Since her life expectancy was not very long and her menstruation started later than today, she had only four years of life during which to menstruate. Today, on the other hand, a woman has 35 years to menstruate in, and after that she lives for 25 years after the menopause.

What does this new situation do to women's bodies? No one really knows yet. Evelyne Sullerot comments that we will probably soon have to decide by referendums, whether women want a pill to take away their menstruations for the whole of their lives, except when they wish to conceive; or whether on the contrary they want to keep on menstruating much longer, since this in certain aspects is very healthy and keeps our skin and other organs youthful. One may add that as long as a woman menstruates, she is protected by her hormones against the cardio-vascular diseases that carry our menfolk away. Another instance of the natural superiority of women, which we have certainly not exploited sufficiently yet.

Now, by thiyl time you may well be wondering whether I want to supplant the older form of sexism by a new one, that is to say by the supremacy of women. No, I do not want to do that and chiefly because it would be so unfair to men, who are by birth and breeding the weaker sex. I shall explain what I mean by this.

Weaker by birth, certainly. More boy foetuses die than girl foetuses, more newborn boys than girls. To compensate for this, slightly more boys than girls are started at conception. Later on in life, hospitals are much more full of men than women, and everybody knows that in old age women far outnumber men.

So we should really be careful about our weaker sex. That they have stronger muscles is an asset they have to pay for directly by having a set of hormones which makes them especially sensitive to stress and heart disease.

What about breeding? Well, here the anthropologists have come up with some interesting new facts, which I shall lay before you. According to the latest reports there are real, cross-cultural differences in all human societies between the way little girls and little boys perceive the world and themselves.

The girl knows she will be a woman and a mother, like her mother. She can easily imagine what it is to be a mother. She is one to her dolls already in her second year. She also learns that she will become a woman by natural degrees, without doing anything about it. It will be unmistakeable, irreversible, undisputable. Certain things will happen to her body, which no-one can deny. Being a woman means just being. She can rest in that.

The little boy, on the other hand, will have to stop identifying with his mother (which is what he starts with, just like his sister) and propose to become a father instead. A father's role is far less easy to understand. A man's role, furthermore, is not something that comes naturally. He will have to meet challenges, to prove his manhood, not just once but over and over again. He can never be quite certain that he is a man and never that he is

a father. He can never rest in his manhood, as she can in her womanhood.

In order to cope with this situation, human cultures have developed a thousand ingenious ways of giving men this certainty. The fact that male jobs and occupations and rituals have higher status than female ones is probably just one of the responses to this challenge. Man must be able to be secure somewhere - so we invented the men's house in New Guinea and the Men's club in Pall Mall.

On the other hand, Margaret Mead concludes (for these thoughts are to a certain extent hers), few cultures, if any, have met the opposite challenge: that of giving women the divine discontent that will take them out of their pleasurable certainty and send them on adventures.

These adventures are the ones that we should now set out on. But before we do that, let me say one last word about our contribution as women to the most central theme of all: our faith. Do we want to abolish sexism inside our churches too, and will that mean pushing our men right over the edge, out of their last stronghold? Well, we certainly will read the Gospels and the whole of the Bible with our own eyes and see what is written there in quite new ways. We will notice all those women around Christ, serving him, providing for him, being sent out by him to tell the world he is Christ and that he has risen. We will notice that the women are just as indispensable as the male disciples. We also remember that it is only to one of the women that Jesus has promised that her act will be recorded wherever the Gospel is preached.

But we have never said as a consequence of all this that we should be preferred before our brethren.

We have not said: because Christ is born of woman and not of man, therefore women should have the foremost seats in his church.

We have not said: because the women were first at the grave, therefore they must have the monopoly of announcing His resurrection.

We have not said: because Jesus praised Mary Magdalene and rebuked Judas, therefore women must always decide about the economy of the church.

Nor have we ever said: because Jesus spoke so often and so willingly to women that his disciples were amazed, therefore women are better fitted to understand the word and should preach it rather than the brethren.

Such arguments are not ours. We would have equality in the Church, as in the state and in the home. We gladly give the same place to vacillating Peter and to attentive Mary. We give the same honour to John who lay at his heart and to Mary who carried him under hers. We would nothing rather than to recreate in the church that image of man which was in the beginning, where it is written: man and woman, he created them.

*This was a speech presented by Dr. Kerstin Anér at LWF European consultation for women, June 8 at Vienna 1979.  
She is under-secretary of state, in Sweden.*

#### Highlighting

From a provocative article in  
Harvard Business Review  
(May-June 1977)

Two women, three men on a Raft, by Robert Shrank who is a project specialist for the Ford Foundation in New York City. He tells what happened during a week of "survival training" sponsored by Outward Bound.

When one of the two men was in charge, I was comfortable, supportive, and worked to help him to be a better helmsperson. When a woman was at the helm I seemed to direct my activity at getting her replaced rapidly by one of the men.

A most revealing part of the raft experience was not so much the power relationship between the sexes... but how Bill and I unconsciously or automatically responded to protect our power from female encroachment. When the trip started, I knew that I might have some difficulty accepting a woman at the helm, but I did not realize that the threat would be so great that I would actually desire to see her fail. On that trip I did something new: I actively tried to sabotage Marlene's and Helen's efforts to lead.....

Judging from firsthand experiences and others reports, I believe that what happened on Raft No. 4 occurs in most organizations when women enter positions of leadership.

---

## Fifty Million Children at Work

---

**A**t what age does childhood end? At what age, in your country, are children sewing, weaving connecting wires, stuffing hair into dolls' heads - and who employs them?

Many of us have seen shoeshine boys carrying their boxes through city streets, small girls with crates of fruit for sale. They are visible evidence of child labour in many countries of the world. But we seldom look beneath the cit's smoke-stacks, into factories that benefit from the cheap labour children provide.

Such factories (often owned and protected by multinational corporations) account for tremendous economic growth in some countries - particularly in Asia. But it is not one region's problem; throughout the Middle East, Africa and in parts of Latin America children continue to be exploited through employment at an early age.

Fifty million is a staggering statistic. How can we begin to respond? We can educate ourselves as to the policies and practices of trans-national corporations. We can become aware of what products are made by children, and boycott their purchase. We can simplify our lives so that

we will not be so dependent on these powerful exploiters. And we can support the work of the UN and other international organisations which continue to develop legislation aimed at regulating the practices of multinationals.

We can also help strengthen the International Labour Organisations, which has already provided instruments for our use, in our own national settings, towards the protection of our children's welfare. In 1973 the ILO adopted comprehensive standards towards "the effective abolition of child labour and the progressive raising of the minimum age for admission to employment or work to a level consistent with the fullest physical and mental development of young persons".

Fifteen is the minimum age set by the ILO's Minimum Age Convention. But since 1973, only seventeen states have ratified the Convention: Costa Rica, Cuba, Finland, the Federal Republic of Germany, Iraq, Ireland, Libya, Luxembourg, the Netherland, Niger, Poland, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Uruguay and Zambia.

If your country is not on the list, can you find out why, and press for action to ratify the ILO Convention? If your country is on the list, can you find out whether the obligations it accepted are being enforced? Or are children still working?

*From common Concern  
No 22 May 1979.*

---

---

## The Child in Asia Today

### by Eva L. Shipstone

**F**ifty-six per cent of the world's children live in Asia.

Here, two children are born every second.

Asian children are born into an environment where per capital income is US \$ 160 per year and less.

Fifty per cent of the starving people in Asia are children under 5 years.

In the Middle East 30 to 40 per cent of children die before they are 5 years old.

Here, one child in four gets medical attention at birth or later.

Approximately 240 million children are living in India today. Of these, one out of 23 work as labourers; one out of 2,300 are forced into crime: girls between the ages of 5 and 14 from poor families work 12 hours a day.

In some areas mortality rate is 50 to 70 per cent.

Children represent the future of each nation and of the world.

Children are the most dependent members of our society and the most vulnerable. In fact, they have the longest period of de-

pendency of all things born. They embody the future hope of the world. And yet about 75 per cent of the world's children grow up in poverty-ridden conditions. It is, therefore, only right that the United Nations has declared the year 1979, International Year of the Child (IYC).

The objectives of IYC are:

- (1) "To provide a framework for advocacy on behalf of children.....;" to enhance an awareness on the part of decision makers and the public ; and
- (2) to promote recognition of the need for integrating programmes for children in national and international planning.

The IYC is helping to bring the focus back on the child and his needs. Until now UN Declarations were distant goals encased in rhetoric. Facts of life in Asia is bitter medicine shelved by policy-makers and the general public alike.

Nearly 60 to 80 per cent of Asian children live in rural areas, in tribal concentrations, or in pockets of urban slums

under dehumanising living conditions, as silent victims of social injustice. Hunger, malnutrition, disease, lack of clean drinking water, lack of decent housing and proper sanitation, lack of health care and medical care become child killers. Of those who survive, at least half of them suffer from gross malnutrition and consequent physical disabilities and diseases and mental retardation. Many become disabled with rickety bone formations, diseased liver, poor vision or blindness, depressed IQs, poor memories, limited imagination. Because of extreme poverty children are often exploited as farm hands, construction workers, in factories and mines, as domestic aides and in other low-paid jobs. Because children do not have a vote and are politically unimportant - at least as far as short-term politics is concerned - national and international development planning have given them low priority.

Excepting only about two or five per cent of children from affluent communities where their basic rights to life, food, health, nutrition, clean environment, pure drinking water, education, recreation, love and security are assured, the problems of the majority from poor and backward communities are the problems of their whole communities. Thus children's problems cannot be solved in isolation. Only as whole communities are raised to decent human standards of living that the children of these communities will be assured a happy childhood.

Asian Women.

Geneva, July 5, reuter.  
Christian women from 31 countries have called on the Church to work for the removal of all restrictions on abortion, the World Council of Churches (Wcc) said today. A special WCC women's conference on human rights declared a woman should be able to base her decision about abortion the Geneva based World Council said. The WCC links nearly 300 Churches of the Protestant, Orthodox and old Catholic faiths. It said the week-long conference had just ended in Venice, recommended the withdrawal of investments in racist regimes. The Church must campaign to break all trade and tourist links with such regimes the Women said.

She said

Transsexual (male and female) being interviewed on CBS evening news: "One thing I have noticed in the way I am treated as a Woman. People act as if my I.Q. automatically dropped 20 points."

---

## Women Leaders

DR. B.V. SUBBAMMA



Dr. B. V. Subbamma known the World over one of the most outstanding Asian Lutheran women. Subbamma was born in a Hindu family in Guntur District, Andhra Pradesh. She became a Christian while she was studying in College. She obtained three degrees in India-B.A., B.Ed., and B.D. and she received three degrees in the USA- M.A. in Education, M.A. in Missions and Ph.D..

In a unique efforts she founded the Christian Ashram programme with its many fold activities. Besides agricultural extension programme, courses for sewing, typing, literacy, etc.,the Ashrams offer the possibility of Spiritual renewal through a genuine community life. As well as directing Ashrams in eight Cities, Dr. Subbamma is known as a speaker and writer. She is also a member of the LWF Executive Committee. Inspite of her high qualifications a great merits, her herarts desire to be Ordained into the ministry has so far remained unfulfilled. Although there is a burning need, Lutheran Churches in India so far refuse the ordination to women.

---

LES RAPPORTS ENTRE L'HOMME ET LA FEMME CHEZ LUTHER,  
DANS LE CADRE DE SA CONCEPTION DE L'EGLISE.  
EXTRAITS DE "AMIS EN CHRIST" PAR GERTA SCHARFFENORTH.

1. ANTHROPOLOGIE THEOLOGIQUE DE LUTHER

L'analyse des œuvres de LUTHER sur le mariage, la famille et le célibat a fait apparaître une conception claire et précise de la particularité de l'homme et de la femme, adjoints l'un à l'autre. Il ne conçoit leurs relations nullement d'une manière statique, mais directement liées à la relation des générations entr'elles. En tant qu'exégèse, LUTHER conçoit l'être humain en tant qu'homme et femme; il développe ce concept à partir des textes de l'Ancien Testament sur la Création qu'il interprète christologiquement. Pour lui, l'homme et la femme dépendent globalement l'un de l'autre, du fait qu'ils ont reçu ensemble la vocation de créer, dont ils ont à rendre compte ensemble devant Dieu (Genèse 1/27 - 31). Le fait d'être adjoints l'un à l'autre, même physiquement, est un don de Dieu qui permet à l'homme et à la femme de respecter et d'aimer dans l'autre sexe la particularité de l'image humaine créée par Dieu. C'est à partir d'énoncés scripturaires que la répression de la corporalité et de la sexualité telle qu'elle a apparu dans la doctrine de l'Eglise put être surmontée. La complémentarité mutuelle, la sécurité dans la communion et la joie de l'un dans l'autre (Genèse 2/18; 23 et 24) qui sont à la fois don et vocation, sont constamment mis en danger par la désobéissance de l'homme. Une dépréciation de la femme est impossible d'après le concept du Dieu incarné chez LUTHER.

LUTHER voit aussi le respect mutuel de l'homme et de la femme fondé dans leur origine physique, puisque chacun de nous doit sa vie à un père et à une mère. Mais comme ils dépendaient eux-mêmes, pendant leur jeunesse, de l'amour des soins et des conseils de leurs parents, ainsi, même s'ils n'ont pas de descendants directs, doivent-ils cette aide aux enfants. Ceci est d'autant plus important là où eux-mêmes ont manqué d'amour de la part de leurs parents et qu'ils savent combien cela influe sur le déroulement de leur vie. Le souci commun qu'ils ont pour leurs enfants les obligent toujours à dépasser leur propre vie; ainsi les parents participent, selon LUTHER, d'une manière décisive à la réalisation de la mission qui nous a été assignée par le Créateur. LUTHER fait découler les critères du comportement entre l'homme et la femme de la volonté du Créateur, révélé en Christ et non pas des structures d'un monde déchu. Ainsi le soin des enfants, leur éducation, jusqu'à dans les plus petites choses n'est pas une responsabilité spé-

---

cifiquement féminine, mais, d'un point de vue chrétien, la tâche commune de la mère et du père.

## 2. LES RAPPORTS ENTRE L'HOMME ET LA FEMME DANS L'EGLISE

L'étude des écrits ecclésiologiques confirme les grandes lignes de cette anthropologie théologique. Dans ses travaux exégétiques, Martin LUTHER approfondit cette vision de l'homme et de la femme. La justification du pécheur par la foi (Rom. 3/28) ne libère pas seulement l'individu en tant que tel pour une vie nouvelle. En Christ, les rapports humains en général, se transforment donc aussi entre l'homme et la femme (Gal. 1/3, 26-28). Depuis ses premiers sermons, jusqu'aux écrits tardifs comme "ce qu'est, qui est et où est l'église", comme dans son explication du troisième article de la foi, LUTHER maintient à travers tous les conflits de la Réforme naissante que, sur le fondement du baptême que les membres de l'Eglise visible ont les mêmes droits à tous les dons de la grâce. L'Eglise qui vit "dans le monde", mais qui n'est pas "du monde" est appelée à vivre de telle manière (dans le culte, l'usage des biens matériels, le service de l'amour) que l'Evangile s'exprime par la puissance du Saint Esprit dans les couples et les familles, parmi les voisins et dans les affaires publiques. En effet, l'Eglise doit être "le sel de la terre" (Matth. 5/13). Le processus de sanctification de ses membres doit apparaître dans l'ensemble de sa vie, aussi dans la vie extérieure et physique.

Malheureusement, dit LUTHER, on trouvera toujours encore dans l'Eglise des remarques désobligeantes à l'égard des femmes, des attitudes cruelles vis-à-vis des enfants et méprisantes vis-à-vis des faibles et des petits. C'est ainsi que se manifeste le péché. Mais les membres de l'Eglise doivent réagir ouvertement et témoigner positivement de leur foi. La réconciliation doit devenir réelle en leur sein, entre les sexes, les générations, les ennemis. Hommes et femmes sont appelés à devenir "amis en Christ" et ainsi porteurs d'une mission de paix (Matth. 5,9). Et puisque l'Evangile s'adresse à tous les hommes, l'homme et la femme dépendent aussi l'un de l'autre dans le ministère et les services de l'Eglise. Séparation et division peuvent être surmontées dans la Sainte Cène. Selon LUTHER, elles renouvellement la vie de la communauté et la lient à la chrétienté dans tout le monde.

C'est donc à partir de cette conception de la justification et de la sanctification, du baptême et de l'eucharistie que les structures juridiques et sociales des Eglises de la Réforme trouvèrent leur expression, essentiellement à partir du mouvement de laïcs. La discipline des Eglises du 16e siècle manifeste l'importante participation des laïcs dans les divers ministères et services, les femmes étant catéchètes (considéré comme un ministère spirituel), en tant que "servantes de l'Eglise" avec les fonctions les plus diverses, en particulier dans le domaine de l'entraide. La réglementation des responsabilités évitait

---

soigneusement une conception hiérarchique des ministères. La doctrine du sacerdoce universel chez LUTHER qui inclut les femmes, peut être documentée jusqu'au 17e siècle.

### 3. LE RENOUVELLEMENT DE LA FONCTION DE PERE ET DE MERE

La responsabilité commune de l'homme et de la femme est illustrée de manière exemplaire pour l'Eglise et la communauté dans la fonction de père et de mère; ceci se trouve exposé dans le catéchisme et les écrits sur les tâches formatrices. Le fondement biblique et exégétique est lié chez LUTHER à sa propre expérience comme enfant. La place prédominante que LUTHER donne, contrairement à la doctrine de l'Eglise de son temps, aux parents, est fondée :

1. sur son anthropologie théologique : en tant qu'enfant, l'homme dépend de l'assistance et de la direction de la mère et du père, afin qu'il (elle) lui enseigne la confiance et la possibilité de juger et d'agir d'une manière responsable. Là où les parents prennent leur tâche au sérieux, les enfants le leur rendent en respect et amour et en assistance, lorsque les parents sont devenus vieux et faibles. La fonction parentale prend une position primordiale dans l'Eglise;
2. par la manière dont ils vivent leur rôle et ainsi imprègnent la compréhension de leurs enfants sur la compréhension et le contenu de la foi;
3. il est dans l'intérêt commun de soutenir les pères et les mères dans leur rôle d'éducateurs, en particulier par l'érection d'écoles pour les jeunes gens. La qualité des institutions civiques et l'exercice de fonctions publiques dépendant en grande partie de la formation de la jeune génération;
4. "l'économie du foyer" se situe à un niveau suffisamment visible pour que l'on y prépare des aptitudes qui marqueront l'ensemble d'une vie telle : l'amour du prochain, la rectitude, l'utilisation modérée des biens matériels, les égards vis-à-vis de tous les hommes et créatures, ainsi que l'orientation de notre comportement selon la règle d'or (Matth. 7,12), comme dans toutes ces fonctions l'homme et la femme portent selon LUTHER des responsabilités identiques. Là où elle est exercée correctement, l'autorité commune du père et de la mère devient exemplaire pour l'utilisation du pouvoir par les gouvernants. Leur autorité trouve son fondement dans l'obéissance aux commandements de Dieu; elle est clairement limitée par la responsabilité croissante des enfants grandissants et par l'incertitude de notre propre vie. Pour LUTHER, les pères et les mères assument leur co-responsabilité dans l'église et la cité en "envoyant" leurs enfants à l'école, pour qu'ils apprennent comment ils peuvent remplir leur fonction de serviteur dans le règne spirituel et temporel de Dieu. En ce sens, ils peuvent ériger une digue contre la trop grande importance des intérêts économiques auxquels, à l'aube des

---

temps nouveaux, beaucoup se sont soumis dans les villes et dans les familles.

LUTHER demandait que l'état parental soit placé au-dessus de tous les autres. Il en découlait pour l'Eglise et le corps pastoral la tâche de veiller à ce que les parents assument consciencieusement leur responsabilité pédagogique et qu'ils soient soutenus par les paroisses et les communes. A cet effet, il faut que "des droits fondamentaux leur soient assurés". Cette nouvelle compréhension pour la fonction de père et de mère en particulier par le truchement de l'enseignement catéchétique a eu un impact considérable dans le processus d'éducation populaire qui opposait à la prédominance des intérêts matériels, une conception de la vie ancrée dans la notion de création.

---

#### LE MONDE DU TRAVAIL ET LA PROTECTION DE L'ENFANCE

L'Institut International d'Etudes Sociales apportera sa contribution aux activités des Nations Unies pour l'Année Internationale de l'Enfance en organisant un colloque interafricain sur Le monde du travail et la protection de l'enfance. La Colloque a déjà reçu l'appui de l'Unité Africaine, de la Commission Economique des Nations Unies pour l'Afrique, du Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement, ainsi que des gouvernements norvégien et néerlandais. Plusieurs autres gouvernements et institutions nationales ont aussi assuré leur soutien au Colloque. Il se tiendra, grâce à la coopération du Gouvernement de la République Unie du Cameroun, à Yaoundé, du 12 au 15 décembre 1979.

Ce Colloque fournira avant tout à des experts et dirigeants sociaux d'Afrique l'occasion de discuter des conditions dans lesquelles les enfants sont élevés et des répercussions de cette éducation sur leur future intégration au monde du travail. Quatre thèmes de discussion feront l'objet de documents de base préparés pour le Colloque:

1. les travailleurs de l'avenir: orientation professionnelle des enfants et problèmes du travail des enfants.
2. protection des enfants contre la violence, les abus, les blessures corporelles et l'abandon.
3. le rôle des organisations non gouvernementales dans la protection de l'enfance, et
4. les mesures à prendre pour la protection et les soins aux enfants dont les parents travaillent en dehors du foyer.

Bien que le présent Colloque se limite au cadre africain, on espère qu'il servira de point de départ à un plus vaste programme de recherche et d'éducation relatif aux problèmes de l'enfance dans d'autres pays et continents.

## "ARBEITSLOSE MÄDCHEN KAUM UNTERZUBRINGEN"

Erfahrungsbericht der Lichtenfelser Modell-Beratungsstelle

Lichtenfels, 17. Mai 79 (epd) - Auf den erschreckend hohen Anteil junger Mädchen unter den jugendlichen Arbeitslosen im ländlichen Raum hat die Sozialpädagogin Gisela Hellinger hingewiesen. In einem Erfahrungsbericht der vom Diakonischen Werk getragenen Modellberatungsstelle für jugendliche Arbeitslose in Lichtenfels beklagt die Mitarbeiterin, dass im Gegensatz zu männlichen Jugendlichen, Mädchen in diesem Raum oft keine Aussicht auf eine Arbeitsstelle hätten. Auch Mädchen mit mittlerer Reife seien teilweise schon über ein halbes Jahr arbeitslos. "Falls sie nicht einen der vier weiblichen Hauptberufe wie Verkäuferin, Friseuse, Arzthelferin und Bürogehilfin anstreben, besteht so gut wie keine Möglichkeit, sie beruflich unterzubringen", meint Gisela Hellinger auf Grund ihrer Erfahrungen. Im Raum Kronach/Lichtenfels gebe es vorerst auch noch keine Möglichkeiten, Mädchen in Männerberufen zu beschäftigen. "Die Betroffenen würden einen solchen Beruf zwar gerne erlernen, die Bemühungen bleiben jedoch an dem Unwillen der Arbeitgeber stehen". Den Anteil der Mädchen unter den arbeitslosen Jugendlichen, die im Rahmen des Modellversuchs "Treffpunkt Jugendberatung" seit Sommer vorigen Jahres betreut wurden, beziffert die Sozialpädagogin mit etwa 70 Prozent.

Das Diakonische Werk der Dekanatsbezirke Kronach, Ludwigsstadt und Michelau bietet seit Sommer vorigen Jahres jugendlichen Arbeitslosen auf dem Land gezielte Hilfen zur Bewältigung ihrer Lebenssituation an. Nach Mitteilung von Norbert Flossmann, Geschäftsführer des Diakonischen Werkes, liegen gegenwärtig in Bayern für den ländlichen Bereich noch wenig verwertbare Erfahrungen vor.

BRD : FRAUEN WENDEN SICH VON DER KIRCHE AB

Mainz, 22. Mai (Kipa). Immer mehr katholische Frauen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland wenden sich von der Kirche ab. Innerhalb weniger Jahre hat sich, nach den Worten des Mainzer Ordinariatsrats Hermann Mayer, die Beteiligung der Frauen am kirchlichen Leben um 20 Prozent verringert. Vor der Delegiertenversammlung der Katholischen Frauengemeinschaft Deutschland (KFD) in Mainz, nannte Mayer als einen der Hauptgründe für den "besorgnis-erregenden Auszug der Frauen aus der Kirche" Unzufriedenheit mit der Rolle der Frau in der Kirche. Dazu komme die wachsende Erkenntnis, dass vieles, was bisher als zur Natur der Frau gehörig angesehen worden sei, sich inzwischen als lediglich von der Gesellschaft den Frauen aufgezwungen erwiesen habe. Vor den 400 Delegierten in Mainz betonte KFD-Generalsekretärin Dr. Anneliese Lissner, die katholischen Frauen wünschten den Einsatz im Dienst der Kirche. Diese Einsatzbereitschaft werde jedoch u.a. durch das Kirchenrecht und durch verengte Rollenvorstellungen diskriminiert.

---

Fantasie von übermorgen

Und als der nächste Krieg begann,  
da sagten die Frauen: Nein!  
Und schlossen Bruder, Sohn und Mann  
fest in der Wohnung ein.

Dann zogen sie, in jedem Land,  
wohl vor des Hauptmanns Haus  
und hielten Stöcke in der Hand  
und holten die Kerls heraus.

Sie legten jeden übers Knie,  
der diesen Krieg befahl:  
die Herren der Bank und Industrie,  
den Minister und General.

Da brach so mancher Stock entzwei.  
Und manches Grossmaul schwieg.  
In allen Ländern gab's Geschrei,  
und nirgends gab es Krieg.

Die Frauen gingen dann wieder nach Haus,  
zum Bruder und Sohn und Mann,  
und sagten ihnen, der Krieg sei aus!  
Die Männer starnten zum Fenster hinaus  
und sahn die Frauen nicht an ...

(E. Kästner, Für Erwachsene, p. 42)

---

## DOWRY or DEATH

**India** Two gruesome deaths have focused fresh attention on the hundreds of Indian women who die each year for want of rich dowries to meet their husband's financial expectations.

A 25 years old Sikh girl, married for five months, was set on fire two weeks ago in her home in a Delhi suburb. Before she died, Tarvinder Kaur told Police that her mother-in-law poured kerosene on her, while her sister-in-law set a match to her clothes. Tarvinder's parents alleged she had been threatened and burned to death, in a small dingy bathroom. Her parents say she was killed. The Hardy's say she killed herself. The neighbours heared her scream for ten minutes, but when they went to her rescue, the husband and mother-in-law were alleged to have refused to open the door.

The wide press coverage these incidents were given has once again brought to the public's attention the money millions of parents are forced to pay bridegrooms and their families, albeit illegally.

Many marriages have broken up and hundreds of young women have been tortured or killed because they failed to bring enough marriage money with them. A Delhi police report said 200 women died of burns last year in the capital, most of these, martyrs to dowry as the Times of India called them, were newly married and between 20 and 35 years old. Of the 200 cases, only nine were investigated and charges filed against the husbands. The others could not be proved, because neighbours declined to act as witnesses, said a spokeswoman of street Sangharsh, a Women's Organisation fighting against the dowry deaths.

Several women's organisations have demanded that an unnatural death of a woman within the first ten years of marriage should be investigated as murder.

The state governments of Orissa, Bengal and Bihar have made a dowry death a criminal offence in northern Punjab state, the law lays down that an autopsy must be conducted on women who die unnatural deaths within the first seven years of marriage.

The price is often lowered or raised depending on what a girl looks like. Almost always she is closely inspected before a price is named. The Indian Express reported that a girl's parents were forced to pay much more than the normal rate, because she had a limp.

The bridegroom's exorbitant demands have ruined families particularly the poor in the towns and villages. The huge debts they run-up after a wedding take years to clear.

For this reason the birth of a girl is viewed as a curse on the family. Three years ago doctors at the Indian Institute of Medical Sciences were forced to suspend tests on pregnant women to find out the sex of their babies, following frequent requests to destroy the foetus if it was a girl.

Dowry is prohibited by law but parents bring formal charges because of social pressures.

Mrs. Pramila Dandavate, secretary of an anti-dowry committee, said the existing law was rarely enforced, the six month prison term for the offence was not enough for the physical and mental torture a woman is put through. She added in the absence of a rigorous enforcement of anti-dowry laws, the system of buying and selling bridegrooms to the highest bidder continues to flourish among all classes.

The price is determined by the bridegroom's profession, his salary, caste and family background.

Police officers, civil servants and executives are the most in demand and fetch between 50,000 rupees (\$ 6,150) and 1000,000 rupees (\$12,300)

A dowry is negotiated well ahead of the wedding when it is given mostly in cash among the middle and upper classes and also includes furniture, household appliances, a car or a motor scooter.

*New Delhi June 8 Reuter*

---

---

# **WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT**

---

Girls are born with less of a chance for full development than boys. Sometimes even parents are disappointed when their baby is not male. In many countries a woman's status depends on how many boys she can produce. Girls don't count.

Throughout their lives women are more likely to be hungry, poor, sick, illiterate and mistreated than men. They are generally considered less important, less intelligent and less valuable than men. Legal, cultural and religious discrimination make women second-class citizens. Their almost universally low status is at the root of much of their suffering. Women's needs require a special emphasis if this long-standing injustice is to be overcome.

In the United States and most other countries, women have also been conditioned to want and expect less than men in education, work opportunities, wages and even food. Men are seen as providers and therefore must have the best

of what is available. Women who usually receive little or no pay for their work as wives, mothers and family laborers, get the left-overs.

In many parts of the world women and children are more likely than men to be malnourished, because they must wait to eat until the men have finished. Where there is little protein available, the men get most of it, leaving mainly carbohydrates for the women and children. Female children fare worst of all in this regard.

Half of all the women in the world live and work on the farm lands of developing countries. These women are responsible for 40%-80% of all agricultural production in those countries. Yet women's important role in producing and marketing food has been virtually ignored by development planners.

The failures of the First Development Decade (the 1960s) were widely recognized by the early 1970s.

---

Economic growth through rapid industrialization did not filter down to most of the poor. In fact, some of the poor-particularly women-not only received disproportionately fewer benefits but were worse off because of the development strategies of the 1950s and 1960s. Policies and projects were deliberately designed to remove women from productive activities in the food cycle. Emphasis on new techniques, modern machinery, educational opportunities, agricultural training and extension services were all aimed at men. (For example, men are not used to thinking of women as tool makers and tool users, so women get little training or resources to redesign their own tools and make their work easier). Therefore, men often replaced women in jobs, taking away the female's traditional livelihood and offering little or no assistance in return. In Jakarta for example, a new rice hulling machine, operated by 19 men eliminated employment for 1600 women.

#### WESTERNIZATION

The status that developing-country rural women had before the period of colonialization was undermined by the restructuring of the economic system in these societies. Money, rather than goods for barter, became necessary for survival. In most places the traditional bartering and subsistence farming no longer sufficed to meet a family's needs. As a result, women had a harder time making ends meet than before Industrialization and a new system of taxation channelled men

into wage-paying jobs in places such as mines, plantations and colonial government offices and into growing crops for export or non-local consumption. Title to land formerly shared communally was given to men only. The all-male colonial governments gave women little or no political authority.

Independence rarely restored women's pre-colonial status. The opportunity and ability to earn money became and remains essential for survival, but a woman's need for an income is frequently ignored or considered secondary to that of a man. "Women's work" is rarely considered valuable in economic terms. Women are not paid for preparing the family's food, cleaning house, carrying water and fuel, providing health care, producing and raising children, caring for animals, spinning and weaving, threshing, husking, maintaining vegetable gardens and bartering food and artifacts between families. In male-headed households, women usually remain economically dependent on men and have little voice in family decisions. This economic invisibility has been partly responsible for the lack of attention to women's needs for better tools and training when development programs were planned. But women as well as men need access to credit, cooperatives, training and new technology in order to improve their capacity to earn money.

Increasingly, families throughout the world are headed by women who have total responsibility for the welfare of their families. In the developing countries women head one-third of rural families. Some 39% of the families in Costa Rica are headed by women; in Grenada, the figure is 46%; in Kenya, it is 40%. No husband is present in 10.6% of all U.S. families, according to the Census Bureau. One-third of these households subsist on poverty incomes.

Many social scientists feel that these figures for all countries are low, because they fail to take into account de facto female heads of households who have economic responsibility for the family even though a wage-earning male is present. For example, wives in many nations are responsible for providing food and clothing for themselves and their children.

The increasing phenomenon of divorce and desertion in rural areas of developing countries is often brought about by economic development strategies that draw men to urban wage-labor markets. Even when the men do not permanently leave the family, the women are left to provide for the family. Extended families would have traditionally provided for these women and children, but these family patterns have increasingly broken down and inflation has eaten up any surplus for most of the poor so they cannot afford extra mouths to feed.

Deserted women badly need money but cannot easily get it. Most are not trained for any job. When they do get a job, it is usually in lower-paying "women's work". If they do the same work as men, they usually get paid less. Even in the United States women's average income is less than 60% of men's. Although "equal pay for equal work" is gaining acceptance in the U.S. labor market, 80% of U.S. women work in 25 categories of "women's jobs". In many parts of the world women continue to be forced out of the wage-labor market, and in some countries their capacity to earn has decreased in the last 10 years. As a result, too many women and their children are forced to continue in the cycle of malnutrition and poverty.

#### WOMEN IN INDUSTRY

More often than not industrial development and export trade have not benefitted the rural poor. Women, when affected at all, have usually been exploited as a source of cheap labor. The plight of women workers in a Korean textile plant provides an example of this sort of discrimination. Approximately three-fourths of all Korean workers in export industries are female. Korean women factory workers, 72% of whom are under 23 years old, are said to work the longest hours and have the highest accident rate in the world. Nevertheless, these women earn an average of \$65 per month. Men workers in Korea make \$112. More than skills and seniority are involved.

Eighty-five percent of the workers at the Dong II Textile Co. at Inchon, Korea are women. In 1972 some women were elected to head the worker's union, but they were not allowed to accept the positions. In February, 1978, union elections were again held at the plant. Male workers and company staff watched by police, destroyed ballot boxes and smeared the faces of voting women with human excrement. The women protested with a two-week hunger strike. A Korean government spokesman writing about the protests summed up the prevalent male view: women "are emotional and less logical (than men). They cannot differentiate the true from the false or the good from the bad. Therefore, women workers can be very easily stirred up and manipulated".

#### EDUCATION NEEDED

Basic education and occupational training are important in giving women the chance to earn money and escape poverty and hunger. Again, these opportunities are denied to women more often than to men. More than 60% of the 800 million illiterates in the world are women. In some areas female illiteracy is 85%. The gap between men's and women's illiteracy rates has grown since 1960 in most countries. (See table).

Girls are often kept home from school to help their mothers with the chores. When they are allowed to go to school to learn basic skills, they tend to drop out earlier than boys. In Africa, 20%-30% of children attending primary school are girls. Female enrollment in secondary school is only 10%-20% of the total.

Education is important not only in providing practical job preparation for women, but it also helps to counter their low self-esteem and to build up their confidence in their ability to do valuable work. An African proverb points to other benefits: "Educate a woman and you educate a family". Education also provides a better understanding of good health practices and family planning. For example the disastrous move from breast-feeding to bottle feeding in developing countries could be reversed by increased nutrition education. Women have been misled by advertisements showing healthy babies with bottles, formula saleswomen dressed as nurses who give advice and free samples and other such promotion techniques by baby food corporations.

#### Private organizations

*Most private, voluntary and Church related organizations with development programs emphasize womens special needs in their project formulation.*

*An example is the United Methodist women's Division special emphasis on "women in rural development." Their criteria for selecting projects include.*

- 1. does the project involve women at all stages from initiation through evaluation,*
- 2. does it enable women to develop positive perception of their value in the rural labour force and to be self-reliant and self-determining.*

---

The impression given is that the bottle-fed child is healthier than the breast-fed one. The tendency to cut costs by diluting formulas too much, as well as the unsanitary preparation of the mixture by women living in poverty conditions, has led to infant malnutrition and mortality in developing countries.

Attempts to provide basic education and training to illiterate rural women, however, are greatly hampered because their heavy workloads leave no extra time or energy for learning.

#### POLITICAL POWER

Hunger and poverty can be eliminated only by facing the conditions that cause and perpetuate them. Discrimination against women is a major cause of their hunger and poverty - and the hunger and poverty of children. Women, wherever they live, have little control over their political and economic lives. Full and equal opportunity for women to participate in and benefit from development will depend on fundamental changes at all levels in all countries. These include changing the attitudes of men and women about male superiority. And to gain the respect that true equality implies, women need, among other things, a fair measure of political power.

Involvement in politics is a relatively new thing for women in many countries. In 1945 only 31 countries allowed women to vote. In 1978 women have this basic right in some 125 countries. But nine nations still exclude women from

voting.

Few women in developed or developing countries have the opportunity to vote for females for public office. Nineteen of the 535 U.S. congressional seats are currently filled by women. This number, which has remained about the same for several years, is expected to decrease after the 1978 elections. There are 702 women legislators in state governments - or 9.3% of the total.

Educated urban women often have rights that are denied to poor rural women. A few women achieve positions of power but, sadly, usually have no understanding of nor inclination to help farm women. Even in the handful of countries that have women leaders, there are few women at the lower levels of government and the low status of women in society has changed.

Not surprisingly, women who are alienated from the political process do not consider voting important. A 1972 UNICEF study of developing countries reported that women who had the political right to vote seldom did, and men usually directed the votes of women who did vote.

#### PROSPECTS

Rural women in developing countries stand to benefit from the "new directions" focus of development aid. The large scale efforts of the past have usually missed women, but the new programs directed at small farmers and labor-intensive food production have a greater chance of reaching them. Often just providing basic resources (such as

tools, credit and training) to indigenous women and women's organizations would be enough to enable them to meet their family's basic needs.

Active women's organizations have played - and will continue to play - a crucial part in the emerging consciousness about women's neglected role in food production and nutrition. Women's organizations or community networks for women are natural groups, existing in all societies, for promoting development. The University of Colorado's Elise Boulding, an authority on women and food systems, says "This capacity for self-organization will in the end be what brings women into active participation in the development process". One reason is that women's organizations can help raise women's self-image, a necessary ingredient in demanding attention to their problems.

Boulding feels that a member of women's self-reliance programs have been successful, and the idea is spreading. There are now several international organizations promoting self-help for women:

- \* The Working Group of Women in Development, a part of the European Association of Development Research and Training Institute.
- \* The International Roster of Women's Scholars.
- \* ISIS, a Geneva-based international network.

\* Stitching, an international credit facility providing a direct channel for developed-country women to aid women's credit associations, banks and cooperatives in developing countries.

The Coalition on Women in International Development, a group of 80 U.S. organizations, monitors bilateral and multilateral aid programs to see that they follow the "women in development" mandate. The Coalition also urges development agencies to employ women at policy-making levels and as consultants in technical fields. The Coalition's emphasis on the use of women in these roles is crucial, because now few women make decisions affecting either government food policy or development aid efforts.

### Rural poverty

*For men and women alike, rural life in developing countries is likely to mean subsistence wages, poor health and work which is hard and laborious. Two-thirds of all those people designated seriously poor (with incomes below a mean of \$100 a year) live and work in country areas. In 1971 there were 75.5 million landless labourers in the world, earning about 50 US cents a day. Among those underprivileged millions, women are usually the poorest and most vulnerable.*

---

## INTERNATIONAL FORUMS

In 1958 United Nations conference called attention to women's important role in the development process, but no practical strategies emerged from it. It was not until the 1974 Rome World Food Conference that women's particular contribution to food production surfaced in a major way.

In the 1975 International Women's Year conference in Mexico City, 144 countries approved a "World Plan of Action" laying out a five-year program as part of the Decade for Women (1976-1985) to facilitate female participation in development. The 30th session of the United Nations that same year urged countries to give priority to rural women food producers in national development plans.

### U.S. AID

In recognition of the fact that women in developing countries play a significant role in economic production, family support and the overall development process. U.S. aid shall be administered so as to give particular attention to the programs, projects and activities which tend to integrate women into the national economics of developing countries, thus improving their status and assisting the total development effort.

(Section 113, The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961).

In 1973 the above amendment, introduced by Senator Charles Percy, was first killed in conference committee, but later voted into the 1961 Foreign Assistance Act after active lobbying by women's organizations. The amendment's "women in development" language is now also a part of every law controlling U.S. contributions to international organizations.

A Women in Development office was established in the Agency for International Development (AID) in 1974. It has had a rocky beginning. The attitudes of many AID decision makers and program operators, most of whom are men, reflect a traditional view of women's roles. Often these officials have not acknowledged the economic function of rural women in developing countries. Even when they have recognized women's importance to development they have not known how to design programs to involve women or to evaluate the effectiveness of these programs. Too often the result has been only lip service to the congressional mandate.

Critics within and outside the agency say that little is being done to find ways to help promote women in development. AID administrator John J. Gilligan has said the "not much....is being done to improve (women's) position or give them the training that would increase agricultural productivity."

AID's programs for women have focused primarily on nutrition and family planning and has virtually ignored women's potential for improving food production and the economy. Little assistance has been given to agricultural or vocational training programs for women.

AID credit extension programs often require collateral, such as title to land, that women traditionally do not have. Coralee Turbitt, President of the International Center for Research on Women, visited AID projects in several countries. She observed that in Chad, where women do three-fourths of the agricultural work and market all the dairy products, there were no women involved in agricultural training programs.

In the August, 1978 "Report on Women in Development" requested by Congress, AID gives the following progress report on an agricultural training project in Kenya, where "farm women have traditionally been excluded from credit, cooperative membership, access to new technologies, etc."

Results have been mixed. Although one-half of the farmers trained the first year were women, participation rates were affected by the difficulty of leaving household responsibilities to spend a week at training sites. US AID will urge that in the future training be modified to deal with this problem.

A second problem has been the male extension workers' reluctance to work with women farmers and extension services have been weak under this project.

The 1978 foreign aid appropriations include \$10 million for demonstration projects seeking to make women equal partners in economic development activities.

#### SELF-RELIANCE

The 1978-79 "offering of letters" emphasizes the need to make all U.S. foreign aid programs contribute to greater self-reliance for poor countries and their people, decreasing their dependency on aid. Food aid, for example, should ensure that more food is produced by underdeveloped countries. Women's major role as food producers in most poor countries should, therefore, make them prime targets of our efforts to use aid for food self-reliance. Any programs helping to make food accessible to people must be responsive to and include the participation of women.

Bread for the World maintains that self-reliance is the long, hard necessary way out of hunger and poverty. Poor people must participate in this through access to land, improved diets and a greater voice in decision-makings on these matters. It is not always necessary to separate out women's needs from general development needs since many programs benefitting the entire community will help women also. But poor women as well as poor men must be

---

allowed to take responsibility for their own economic lives if they are going to help themselves and be able to contribute to the general welfare. Those who traditionally have been destitute, uneducated, dependent and hopeless will need basic self-reliance-oriented aid first.

A government's conception of the kind of development it wants is crucial. Just "integrating women into their national economies" may not lead either to less poverty or to greater self-reliance for women. A national commitment to implementing the right to food and other human rights is necessary to lead a country to choose the kind of development and economic strategies that emphasize the development of people and enable all their citizens to live with dignity and decency.

---

by Barbara Howell  
Issue Analyst  
Bread for the World  
assisted by Jill Nemeth

Books

Leghorn ,Lisa and Roodkowsky, Mary who really starves? Women and World Hunger. 40pp \$ 1.25 Friendship press, 475 Riverside Drive New York N.Y 10027. 1978.

Rihani, May, Development As If Women Mattered: An Annotated Bibliography with a Third World Focus. 114pp \$ 3.00 Overseas Development Council, 1717 Massachusetts Ave. N.W Washington D.C. 20003.1978

Marilyn French

The women s room ( Jove HBJ) 1978 \$2.50 A good story with insights about women growth since the 50th.

Phyllis Trible

God and the Rhetoric of sexuality (Fortress press, Phila) 1978, \$6.50 Exciting examination of passaged from Genesis.

Ruth and song of Solomaon. Jean Baker Miller,

## **Survey on Women's Church Roles Authorized by Catholic Sisters**

**W**ashington, D.C. (USA) -- The Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR), a national organization representing the leadership of 90 per cent of the some 120,000 Catholic nuns in this country, is sponsoring a comprehensive survey on women in the Catholic Church, with focus on their role in ministry.

According to Sister Doris Gottemoeller, the \$200,000 study, to be carried out by the Center for the Applied Research in the Apostolate and the Gallup Poll, will examine "how Roman Catholic women are serving the Church and how the Church is serving them."

The Mercy Sister explained that the results of the two-year study should assist in future theological reflection, pastoral planning, curriculum design for seminaries, and "full utilization" of the gifts of women in the Church and society -- including the possibility of ordaining women to the Catholic priesthood.

Sister Gottemoeller said that LCWR planned to share results of the survey with the National Conference of Catholic Bishop's Committee on Women in Society and the Church, recently mandated to dialogue with advocates of women's ordination. But the nun insisted that the purpose of the survey was much wider than public opinion on female priests.

She explained that the survey aimed to fill the present gap of empirical research data on the ministerial experience of Roman Catholic women.

"The renewal within Catholicism, together with the impact of the women's movement, have combined to focus attention on the role of women within the Church -- a role changing from passivity to participation and meaningful service," Sister Gottemoeller said.

Sociologist Florence R. Rosenberg has been named as director of the project which will study the formal and informal life experiences of Catholic women, including the areas of liturgy, sacraments, education and social service.

*Lutheran World Federation*

---

## **WHAT NEXT ON DISARMAMENT?**

---

**W**hat has been happening in the UN since the Special Session on Disarmament was held in 1978?

A newly-established Disarmament Commission, for one thing (and a Disarmament Centre at the UN Headquarters in New York); an enlarged Disarmament Committee; and a new Group of Governmental Experts studying the Relationship between Disarmament and Development.

The Disarmament Commission will hold its first major meeting in New York in May/June 1979, focusing on what elements would make up a comprehensive programme of disarmament.

The Group of Governmental Experts met in Geneva last January. Mrs. Inga Thorssen, Sweden's Under-Secretary of State, chaired the meeting. She emphasised that the Group's study will be action-oriented, providing factual ammunition to explode the myths. Specific recommendations will be made to governments on how resources now devoted to armaments and militarism could be used for humanly constructive purposes - for economic and social development. By involving the public as much as possible in conferences, international symposia and hearings, the Group hopes to stimulate the lively public interest that is essential to the success of any disarmament effort.

The UN General Assembly will convene a second Special Session on Disarmament in 1982.

## CONTENTS

LWF EUROPEAN CONSULTATION FOR WOMEN VIENNA.....	1
WHAT IS THE RISING CONSCIOUSNESS OF WOMEN MEAN FOR OUR EUROPE OF TOMORROW ?.....	4
FIFTY MILLION CHILDREN AT WORK.....	20
THE CHILD IN ASIA TODAY.....	21
WOMEN LEADERS .....Dr. SUBBAMMA .....	23
LEO RAPPORTS ENTRE L' HOMME ET LA FEMME CHEZ LUTER.....	24
ARBEITSLOSE MADCHEN KAUM UNTERZUBRINGEN .....	28
FRAUEN WENDEN SICH VON DER KIRCHE AB.....	29
DOWRY OR DEATH.....	30
WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT.....	32
BOOKS.....	40
SURVEY ON WOMEN'S CHURCH ROLES.....	41
WHAT NEXT ON DISARMAMENTS ?.....	42

---

LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION/ DEPARTMENT OF STUDIES  
WOMEN'S DESK: Belletech Deressa, Eva Segal, Eva Zabolai-Csekme  
150, Rte de Ferney, Ch-1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland.